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DEPARTMENT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/03/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR HUME'S COURTESY CALL ON FM WIRAJUDA

Classified By: Ambassador Cameron R. Hume, for reason 1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: In a July 3 courtesy call on Indonesian Foreign Minister Wirajuda as part of the process of presenting ambassadorial credentials, Ambassador Hume highlighted common interests of the two countries, pledged to strengthen the bilateral relationship and commended Indonesia for its progress since 1998 and its religious toleration. Wirajuda welcomed Ambassador Hume's arrival after a considerable hiatus following Ambassador Pascoe's departure, said the U.S.-Indonesia relationship was important, underscored Indonesia's established tradition of moderate Islam and expressed appreciation for U.S. assistance, particularly in combating terrorism. Ambassador's formal presentation of credentials to President Yudhoyono has yet to be scheduled. End summary.

¶2. (C) FM Wirajuda welcomed Ambassador Hume, said the Indonesian government looked forward to working with the Embassy under his direction and underscored the importance of the bilateral relationship. Ambassador echoed Wirajuda's sentiments and pledged to work to strengthen that relationship. President Bush and President Yudhoyono had a strong relationship, he said. The United States and Indonesia shared many common concerns, including justice, democracy, the welfare of their peoples, the rule of law, security and international cooperation. There would be ample opportunity to cooperate in these and other areas.

¶3. (C) Wirajuda related the importance of the building in which they were meeting. It was called the Pancasila building because it was the place where the early republic's founders had deliberated on the country's state philosophy, which had become known as Pancasila (Five Principles). The building had also been the site of deliberations after World War II on the republic's first constitution. These deliberations had included the question of whether Indonesia should become an Islamic republic. Despite the fact that the vast majority of the population was Muslim, the majority of the people had favored a secular state. Indonesia had chosen the middle ground: there was no official state religion, but the government was assigned a role in promoting religious life. Accordingly, the Department of Religion had a division for each major religion represented in Indonesian society.

¶4. (C) In the decades that followed, Wirajuda noted, some Indonesians had still clung to the notion of an Islamic state and the rule of sharia law, and periodically some had endorsed violence to achieve those ends. In a sense, Jemaah Islamiyah terrorists were a continuation of that tendency, despite their broader regional presence. The overwhelming majority of Indonesian Muslims had remained moderate, and terrorism was not gaining ground. Indonesia appreciated the assistance that the United States and other partners had provided to Indonesia in combating terrorism. The success of these collective efforts, however, ultimately depended not

only on capturing and prosecuting the terrorists, but also on strengthening moderate Islamic forces. After September 11 the moderates had grown quiet, but recently they had begun to find their voice again, and Indonesia had sponsored a number of conferences and interfaith dialogues in an effort to bridge differences within Islam as well as between Islam and other religions. Indonesia had also just finished hosting a major conference on police counterterrorism training. Indonesia was becoming more open-minded, both at home and toward its international partners.

¶5. (C) Ambassador Hume pointed out that all U.S. money bore the words "In God We Trust" and that founding documents of the United States often spoke of "one nation under God," yet in none of these references did we ever say who God was. Religion served an important function in many societies as an organizing principle for understanding the world around us. Ambassador related that he had spent most of his time overseas since 1968 in Islamic countries and had witnessed the religious fervor of many Muslims. Fervor was not a threat, but violence was unacceptable as a means of advancing religious ends. Washington appreciated the strides Indonesia had made since 1998 on democracy, rule of law, counterterrorism and security, and Indonesia should explain this progress to the two Congressional delegations (Payne and Faleomaveaga) that were in town this week. Indonesia had a good story to tell and should tell it, he stressed.

¶6. (U) Ambassador will present his credentials to President Yudhoyono through a formal ceremony which has not yet been scheduled.

¶7. (C) COMMENT: President Bush has announced plans to appoint a U.S. ambassador to the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). Given Indonesia's importance as the world's largest Muslim democracy and the example Indonesia can set as a beacon of moderate Islam within the Islamic world, we believe the first stop of the future U.S. envoy to the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) should be Jakarta.  
HUME